

**REMARKS**

In the claims, multiple dependencies have been removed by distributing the limitations. Other changes have been made to correct informalities, such as claim form and antecedent basis. None of these changes are made to avoid any known prior art and none of these changes are considered narrowing amendments. In this manner, the claims should be in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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## CLAIMS AS AMENDED

1. (amended) A connecting element for joining two support members absorbing tensile forces, said connecting element comprising:  
at least a first and a second casing body with a through-hole in each said casing body for receiving the respective support members, which casing bodies can be joined together by way of a joining section at a first end of each casing body, the opposing second end of each casing body being provided with a locking member for holding the support members fast,  
wherein in a working position the locking member of at least one casing body produces an axial locking of the support member running through the casing body by way of a stop part created on the support member with the area of the second end of the casing body.
2. (amended) The connecting element according to claim 1, wherein the stop part is an upset part produced on the support member and having a diameter larger than a diameter of the support member.
3. (amended) The connecting element of claim 2, wherein the through-hole is of stepped design with a first shoulder, against which the stop part rests.
4. (amended) The connecting element according to claim 3, wherein the first shoulder has a bevel against which the stop part rests.
5. (amended) The connecting element of claim 2, wherein the locking member comprises at least two casing parts which in the working position form a stop casing, which forms a second shoulder, against which the stop part rests.
6. (amended) The connecting element according to claim 5, wherein the second shoulder is formed inside the stop casing.
7. (amended) The connecting element of claim 4, wherein the joining section of the casing body comprises means for joining the casing body to an intermediate part.
8. (amended) The connecting element of claim 7, wherein in a working position a recess in the casing viewed in the longitudinal direction of the casing body and the intermediate part, aligns with a fixing unit and encloses the casing body, the fixing unit being arranged so

that it can be fixed to the intermediate part, and a projecting member of the fixing unit being accommodated by the recess, so that the casing body can be torsionally locked to the intermediate part.

9. (amended) The connecting element according to claim 8, wherein the projecting member of the fixing unit can be released so that it is not accommodated by the said recess, thereby allowing the casing body to be released from the intermediate part.

10. (amended) The connecting element of claim 9, wherein the joining section of at least one casing body is torsionally locked by means of a locking pin, which can be inserted through a hole through the casing body and the intermediate part.

11. (amended) A method for fitting a support member to a building construction by means of a connecting element, said method comprising the following steps:

passing a draw wire through a cable duct together with the connecting element so that the connecting element finishes up in an area of a first foundation;

connecting a bracing wire to the connecting element coupled to the draw wire;

passing the bracing wire through the cable duct in the opposite direction by means of the draw wire and the coupled connecting element, so that the connecting element finishes up in an area of a second foundation;

fastening the bracing wire to the first or second foundation; and

detaching the connecting element from the bracing wire.

12. (amended) The method of claim 11, further comprising the steps of:

applying at least one casing body over a stop part produced on each support member;

fitting at least two casing parts around each support member;

drawing each support member so that the stop part bears against the casing parts, which casing parts in a working position rest against an internal shoulder in a through-hole whilst the stop part rests against the casing parts in order to produce an axial locking of the wire ends; and

joining at least one casing body to an intermediate part.

13. (amended) The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of:

locking torsionally at least one casing body to the intermediate part by means of a fixing unit arranged on the intermediate part, which fixing unit has a projecting member,

which during coupling together is released until a recess in the casing body, viewed in longitudinal direction of the casing body and the intermediate part, aligns with the fixing unit and encloses the latter, at which time the fixing unit with its projecting member is brought into engagement with the recess.

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(amended)

14. (amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of:  
locking torsionally at least one casing body to the intermediate part by means of a locking pin.

15. (new) The connecting element of claim 1, wherein the through-hole is of stepped design with a first shoulder, against which the stop part rests.

16. (new) The connecting element according to claim 15, wherein the first shoulder has a bevel against which the stop part rests.

17. (new) The connecting element of claim 1, wherein the locking member comprises at least two casing parts which in the working position form a stop casing, which forms a second shoulder, against which the stop part rests.

18. (new) The connecting element according to claim 17, wherein the second shoulder is formed inside the stop casing.

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19. (new) The connecting element of claim 6, wherein the joining section of the casing body comprises means for joining the casing body to an intermediate part.

20. (new) The connecting element of claim 16, wherein the joining section of the casing body comprises means for joining the casing body to an intermediate part.

21. (new) The connecting element of claim 18, wherein the joining section of the casing body comprises means for joining the casing body to an intermediate part.

22. (new) The connecting element of claim 1, wherein the joining section of the casing body comprises means for joining the casing body to an intermediate part.

23. (amended) The connecting element of claim 2, wherein the joining section of the casing body comprises means for joining the casing body to an intermediate part.

24. (new) The connecting element of claim 19, wherein in a working position a recess in the casing viewed in the longitudinal direction of the casing body and the intermediate part, aligns with a fixing unit and encloses the casing body, the fixing unit being arranged so that it can be fixed to the intermediate part, and a projecting member of the fixing unit being accommodated by the recess, so that the casing body can be torsionally locked to the intermediate part.

25. (new) The connecting element of claim 20, wherein in a working position a recess in the casing viewed in the longitudinal direction of the casing body and the intermediate part, aligns with a fixing unit and encloses the casing body, the fixing unit being arranged so that it can be fixed to the intermediate part, and a projecting member of the fixing unit being accommodated by the recess, so that the casing body can be torsionally locked to the intermediate part.

26. (new) The connecting element of claim 21, wherein in a working position a recess in the casing viewed in the longitudinal direction of the casing body and the intermediate part, aligns with a fixing unit and encloses the casing body, the fixing unit being arranged so that it can be fixed to the intermediate part, and a projecting member of the fixing unit being accommodated by the recess, so that the casing body can be torsionally locked to the intermediate part.

27. (new) The connecting element of claim 22, wherein in a working position a recess in the casing viewed in the longitudinal direction of the casing body and the intermediate part, aligns with a fixing unit and encloses the casing body, the fixing unit being arranged so that it can be fixed to the intermediate part, and a projecting member of the fixing unit being accommodated by the recess, so that the casing body can be torsionally locked to the intermediate part.

28. (new) The connecting element of claim 23, wherein in a working position a recess in the casing viewed in the longitudinal direction of the casing body and the intermediate part, aligns with a fixing unit and encloses the casing body, the fixing unit being arranged so that it

can be fixed to the intermediate part, and a projecting member of the fixing unit being accommodated by the recess, so that the casing body can be torsionally locked to the intermediate part.

29. (new) The connecting element according to claim 24, wherein the projecting member of the fixing unit can be released so that it is not accommodated by the said recess, thereby allowing the casing body to be released from the intermediate part.

30. (new) The connecting element according to claim 25, wherein the projecting member of the fixing unit can be released so that it is not accommodated by the said recess, thereby allowing the casing body to be released from the intermediate part.

31. (new) The connecting element according to claim 26, wherein the projecting member of the fixing unit can be released so that it is not accommodated by the said recess, thereby allowing the casing body to be released from the intermediate part.

32. (new) The connecting element according to claim 27, wherein the projecting member of the fixing unit can be released so that it is not accommodated by the said recess, thereby allowing the casing body to be released from the intermediate part.

33. (new) The connecting element according to claim 28, wherein the projecting member of the fixing unit can be released so that it is not accommodated by the said recess, thereby allowing the casing body to be released from the intermediate part.

34. (new) The connecting element of claim 1, wherein the joining section of at least one casing body is torsionally locked by means of a locking pin, which can be inserted through a hole through the casing body and the intermediate part.

35. (new) The connecting element of claim 29, wherein the joining section of at least one casing body is torsionally locked by means of a locking pin, which can be inserted through a hole through the casing body and the intermediate part.

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36. (new) The connecting element of claim 30, wherein the joining section of at least one casing body is torsionally locked by means of a locking pin, which can be inserted through a hole through the casing body and the intermediate part.

37. (new) The connecting element of claim 31, wherein the joining section of at least one casing body is torsionally locked by means of a locking pin, which can be inserted through a hole through the casing body and the intermediate part.

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38. (new) The connecting element of claim 32, wherein the joining section of at least one casing body is torsionally locked by means of a locking pin, which can be inserted through a hole through the casing body and the intermediate part.

39. (new) The connecting element of claim 33, wherein the joining section of at least one casing body is torsionally locked by means of a locking pin, which can be inserted through a hole through the casing body and the intermediate part.